



"Committed to the protection and promotion of public health."

Gallatin City-County Health Department

For more information, contact:
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The Stomach Flu

During this winter season, Gallatin City-County Health Department would like to remind consumers of good hygiene practices to help prevent the spread of illness like Norovirus. Noroviruses are a group of viruses that cause the "stomach flu," or gastroenteritis (GAS-tro-enter-I-tis) and can spread easily from person to person.

Symptoms of Norovirus illness usually include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach cramping. People also may have low-grade fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, and a general sense of tiredness. The illness often begins suddenly and typically lasts between 24 – 48 hours. Both stool and vomit are extremely infectious to others.

People infected with Norovirus are contagious from the moment they begin feeling ill to at least 3 days after symptoms end. Some people may be contagious for as long as 2 weeks after recovery. Therefore, it is particularly important for people to use good hand washing and other hygienic practices during the illness and after they have recently recovered from Norovirus illness. Particular care should be taken with young children in diapers who may have diarrhea.

Prevention practices include:

- Carefully wash fruits and vegetables.
- Frequently wash your hands using warm water and soap, especially after toilet visits and changing diapers and before eating or preparing food.
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces immediately after an episode of illness by using a bleach-based household cleaner. Follow manufacturer's instructions or mix Chlorine bleach at a minimum concentration of 1000 ppm (generally a dilution 1 part household bleach solution to 50 parts water)

For more information on Noroviruses, visit the department's website at www.gallatin.mt.gov/health and select 'Public Health Information' under "Additional Links".